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Plan for Implementation of
Section 1242 of Public Law 100-204,
1988-89 State Department Authorization Act,
H.R. 1777

U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS AND THE
SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN

SANCTIONS IMPOSED BY THE U.S. AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION IN
RESPONSE TO SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN:

The President's policy toward the Soviet Union is to engage Moscow on the full range of the issues between us. On Afghanistan, his policy has been governed by the U.S. interest in getting the Soviet troops out and restoring the Afghans' right to self-determination. The Administration is using all appropriate means to achieve this objective.

In approaching U.S.-Soviet relationship, the President has chosen to pursue U.S. interests on the basis of mutual benefit. In the area of arms control, for example, the Administration has pressed successfully for an important agreement on the elimination of intermediate range nuclear missiles from Europe and intends to move ahead on other aspects of arms reduction, consistent with the national interest.

On the question of sanctions applied in particular areas of the relationship as a result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the sanctions we imposed at the time of the invasion served their purpose by dramatizing our revulsion at this act of aggression and mobilizing world opinion to condemn the Soviet invasion. The unprecedented vote in the UN General Assembly last fall condemning the Soviet invasion highlighted the fact that U.S. efforts in this area have retained their effectiveness over the years.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/GDC/ME

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By deed as well as in word, the United States has continued to make it clear to the Soviet Union that our opposition to their continued occupation of Afghanistan is unwavering. The pursuit of U.S. interests in other areas of the bilateral relationship does nothing to dilute this message. Subsequent action by the Administration with respect to our sanctions has not altered the basic U.S. goal of getting all Soviet troops out of Afghanistan as quickly as possible and returning the fate of that country to the hands of the Afghan people, where it rightfully belongs.

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AREAS OF ONGOING COOPERATION THAT COULD BE WITHHELD FROM
THE SOVIET UNION:

The current four-part U.S.-Soviet agenda -- encompassing human rights, arms control, regional and bilateral issues -- has been developed on the basis of a realistic and sober appraisal of long-term U.S. national interests. The President has insisted that this relationship be grounded in the mutually reinforcing principles of strength, realism and dialogue. While the interrelationships among the areas are strong and inescapable, the U.S. has maintained flexibility in pursuing its interests in each area of the agenda. Clearly in the abstract one could consider holding specific areas of U.S.-Soviet cooperation hostage to Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. But this Administration has rejected the concept of indiscriminate linkage as flawed, given the impossibility of getting anywhere with a policy which dictates that nothing be solved until everything is solved. The U.S.-Soviet relationship is too difficult and complex to make that a practical option.

The focus of this Administration's strategy for getting the Soviet troops out of Afghanistan has shifted from initial reliance on largely symbolic sanctions to the much more direct method of supporting those brave Afghans who have shown a willingness to fight for genuine Afghan self-determination, free from the shadow of foreign troops. Recent indications of a real Soviet desire to extricate themselves from this ugly war are eloquent testimony to the persistence of the Afghan resistance and its supporters. The Administration intends to continue its support of the Afghan resistance in order to keep the pressure on the Soviet Union to make good on its word and reach agreement on the prompt and complete withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

This subject has topped the list of regional issues in all recent U.S.-Soviet meetings, including the Washington Summit. The Administration intends to keep Afghanistan high on its bilateral agenda with the Soviets until an acceptable settlement has been reached, making clear that its willingness to serve as guarantor of the Geneva Accords depends on a successful outcome which meets the U.S. goal of an independent Afghanistan rid of all Soviet troops.

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DISPOSITION OF SOVIET FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN:

Soviet combat forces may have increased slightly in 1987. A few artillery units and slightly higher personnel levels in units already in the country raised overall Soviet troop strength to about 120,000. According to most estimates, some 30,000 troops in the USSR, primarily just across the border, support combat operations, including flying combat air missions from the USSR. Most Soviet troops remain in static defense/security deployments.

The greatest concentration of Soviet troops is in Kabul. Soviet forces are garrisoned in large numbers at the major air bases, Bagram and Shindand. They are also garrisoned in the major cities throughout the country. Some smaller units are deployed independently, largely for security on the major transportation arteries. As the Khost campaign showed, Soviet forces retain the ability to operate anywhere in the country.

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Hill Afghan Points

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